Q. ***Is it true that when the French in 1954 asked us to help them out at Dienbienphu, our Secretary of State John Foster Dulles offered to drop nuclear bombs on North Vietnam and China as well?—David Howell, Evanston, Ill.***

A. Yes, Dulles made the offer, but it was turned down by Foreign Minister Georges Bidault of France on the grounds that the French soldiers at Dienbienphu were in such close armed conflict with the enemy that they, too, would be atomized by the bombs.

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